



Playing with Literacy at Home

Tips for Families



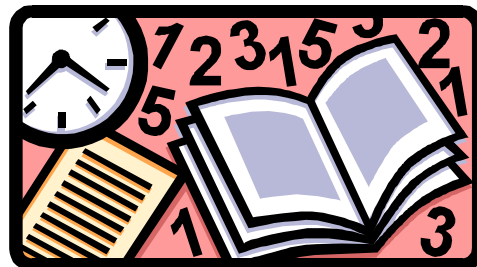
- **Playing with literacy helps your child become comfortable with reading, writing, and math concepts through fun play activities.**
 - ✓ Follow the check-marks for fun family activities!
- **Literacy is a part of everyday life.** Written words and numbers, or print, are all around us—on street signs and buses, in cupboards and refrigerators, on clocks and calendars.
 - ✓ Help your child find examples of print, both inside and outside of your home.
 - ✓ Play the game “I Spy” to help your child become aware of print:
“I spy, with my little eye, the letter *A*. Can you find the letter *A*? I spy, with my little eye, the word *STOP*. Do you see where it says *STOP*?”
- **Young children discover that we use reading and writing to communicate with others.** Pretending to read is an important step in learning to read for real.
 - ✓ Help your child “read” print, by giving clues.
Ask your child to find the words on a cereal box. Ask questions:
“What is in the box? What do you think these words say?” Point to the letters and spell the word with your child.
 - ✓ Encourage your child to “read” a story to you, using pictures or previous knowledge of the story.
Ask your child questions to help extend the story. Praise your child.
When your child is pretending to read, there is no wrong way.
- **Young children understand that print has meaning when they pretend to write.** To adults, it sometimes looks like scribbling or random strings of letters. But this is the first step in learning to write for real.
 - ✓ Make pencils (pens, markers, crayons) and paper available to your child in a special writing area.
 - ✓ When your child is pretending to write, ask him or her to read what it says.
There is no wrong way to write.

- **Children enjoy trying out adult roles when they play “store” or “doctor” or “house.”** Adults use literacy everyday – when shopping, working, using the telephone, visiting the doctor—so why not children? Including literacy in children’s play helps make the experience richer. Children are learning when they are playing.
 - ✓ Include your child when you read, write, or use numbers. Show your child when you write a grocery list, use a recipe, or look up a number in the phone book. Your child can help you, or pretend to do these things too.
 - ✓ Include your child in setting up a pretend play area. Think about your child’s interests. Your child will have lots of ideas!
 - ✓ Do you have things around the house that will help your child pretend? Look for pots and pans, old calendars and magazines, cardboard boxes, old clothes, old telephone or computer, scrap paper, pencils. Use a box or laundry basket to store the new toys.
 - ✓ Play with your child. You can help your child include meaningful literacy experiences during play.
 - If you are playing doctor: call and make an appointment, fill out a pretend medical chart, write a prescription. If you are playing restaurant: follow a recipe, make a menu, take an order.
- **Use your imagination when playing with literacy at home.** You and your child will have a great time, and not even realize that you are learning. Have fun playing!
- **For more information about Play Literacy, visit this website:**
www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/youth/playliteracy.html

Or contact the Readmobile Librarian:

Email: readmobile@scls.lib.wi.us

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